

Report to Place, Economic Growth & Environment Scrutiny Committee

Emergency Planning Annual Report and Proposed On-Call Rota Changes from January 2024

Portfolio Holder: Cllr C Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

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1. Reason for report

This annual report provides an update on the current emergency response on-call structures and potential areas to review. The keys areas reviewed include:

1. Emergency Planning Structure
2. Current on call structures for Gold, Silver and Bronze Officers
3. Possible changes to Gold, Silver and Bronze Structures from January 2024
4. Summary of incidents 2023
5. Completed Training 2023
6. Planned Training 2024

2. Current On-Call Emergency Preparedness Arrangements for Oldham Council

Oldham Council has an emergency response team on call 365 days a year, which is managed and activated via the Control Room at Sir Robert Peacock House (T - 0161 628 2000).

The response structure is made up of the following roles/officers:

- **GOLD OFFICER** – *Chief Executive or representative called upon to provide the strategic response and to lead the recovery of a major incident*

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- **SILVER OFFICER (DUTY CONTROLLER)** – *The on-duty Silver officer will be informed of or called out to provide the tactical response to an incident/emergency*
 - **BRONZE OFFICER (FORWARD INCIDENT OFFICER)** *is called on to provide the initial response to an incident/emergency, often attending the scene*

3. Greater Manchester (GM) Response

First Response staff based at Sir Robert Peacock House provide a 24 hour 365 days per year service that is used to activate the Greater Manchester Authorities Gold officers in any large scale regional emergency and call out the necessary officers from the civil contingencies resilience unit (CCRU) during a major incident.

4. Civil Contingencies and Resilience Unit

The Civil Resilience function is responsible for ensuring effective partnership working is in place and that this is maintained to ensure business continuity and safety for the people of Oldham. The Council works with partners across the region through the Civil Contingencies and Resilience Unit to ensure that the Council is effectively undertaking its Civil Contingences Act functions and duties.

The overall purpose is to ensure the local authority and borough can be resilient by preparing for and responding to emergencies. The Council has several plans in place that sets out the response and recovery arrangements that are in place for Oldham Council to deal with incidents and emergencies, ranging from minor incidents through to large scale incidents. It identifies the responders and key officer's that will undertake these roles during the response and recovery phase.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Key roles and responsibilities are outlined as below that are deployed during an emergency incident. The key roles identified in the Oldham Council emergency response plan are:

- **First Response Control Staff** – *Usually the first people notified of an incident and will stand up all duty officers and support these officers during the response phase of an incident. Will inform relevant Council officers and members of incidents.*
- **Forward Incident Officers** – *The duty officer called on to provide initial response to an incident/emergency, often attending the scene of an incident.*
- **Bronze Duty Officers** – *The out of hours duty lead officer for a specific area of response or recovery when dealing with an incident/emergency*
- **Silver Duty Officers** – *The out of hours duty Silver Officer informed of, or called out, to provide the operational response to an incident/emergency during an out of hours incident*
- **Silver Lead Officers** – *Key Silver Officers identified to support emergency response to incidents during normal office hours.*

- **Gold Officers** – *The Chief Executive or representative called upon to provide the strategic response and to lead the recovery phase of a major incident.*
- **Recovery Lead Officers** – *The senior management leads identified to manage the recovery phase of an incident.*
- **GM Resilience Unit** – *The Greater Manchester team set up to support Councils to plan and respond to emergencies and incidents.*

6. Emergency Planning Team Structure

- SRO – Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
- Chief Officer - Darren McGrattan, Head of Emergency Planning, Events and Highways Operations
- Service Manager - Neil Crabtree, Head of Public Protection
- Service Director – Nasir Dad, Director of Environment
- Leader Portfolio Holder – Cllr Chris Goodwin, Neighbourhoods
- GM Resilience Business Partner: Caitlin Evans
- Bronze / FIOs (Tactical) are at a manager level all based within Public Protection
- Silver / Operational are at Directors, Assistant Directors and Head of Service level
- Gold Officers – Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive’s and Directors

7. Current on call structures for Gold, Silver and Bronze Officers

Below are the current (2023) and proposed (2024) emergency planning structures:

<u>Gold Officers (Strategic Leads):</u>	
1. Harry Catherall 2. Bruce Penhale 3. Gerard Jones 4. Emma Barton 5. Sayyed Osman 6. Paul Entwistle 7. Anne Ryans / Sarah Johnson 8. Jane Ratcliffe 9. Shelley Kipling	1. Emma Barton 2. Bruce Penhale 3. Gerard Jones 4. Sayyed Osman 5. Shelley Kipling 6. Jayne Ratcliffe <u>Reserve:</u> Nasir Dad
<p>Rationale for Proposed Change: Reducing the gold structure from 9 to 6 officers by removing the Chief Executive and Directors of Legal and Finance as they are notified / called upon in the event of any major emergency</p> <p>For resilience, we are adding a reserve officer from Silver to learn Gold duties in readiness should additional support be required</p>	
<u>Silver Officers – Duty Controller (Operational Leads):</u>	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Darren McGrattan 2. Neil Crabtree 3. Alex Bougatef 4. Bryn Cooke 5. Nasir Dad 6. Paul Clifford 7. Rebecca Fletcher 8. Matthew Bulmer 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Darren McGrattan 2. Neil Crabtree 3. Alex Bougatef 4. Bryn Cooke 5. Nasir Dad 6. Paul Clifford 7. Rebecca Fletcher 8. Matthew Bulmer 9. Neil Consterdine
<u>Reserve</u> – Steve Hughes	
<p>Rationale for Proposed Change: Increase silver team to nine officers for added resilience and support when multiple events / incidents require support at the same time.</p> <p>For resilience, (as with Gold), we are adding a reserve officer should additional support be required</p>	
<p><u>Bronze Officer – Forward Incident Officers (Tactical / On Site Support):</u></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John Garforth 2. Harry Mullen 3. Tony Milward 4. Jack Child 5. Daniel Moore 6. Vacant 7. Vacant 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John Garforth 2. Harry Mullen 3. Tony Milward 4. Jack Child 5. Daniel Moore 6. New officer 7. New officer
<p>Rationale for Proposed Change: Following officer retirement, we are currently recruiting to fill two vacancies (from internal workforce) within the Bronze / FIO / site management team</p>	

8. Meetings/Forum:

Emergency Planning Resilience Group is chaired by the Head of Emergency Planning and GM Resilience business partner. It takes place every 2 months, and aims to bring together senior officers from key departments across the council. The departments include Adult Social Care, Highways, Risk and Resilience, Comms, HR. The forum looks at plans, training needs and maintains an overview of the distinct emergency planning and resilience work streams. Key topics for regular review include:

- Flood meeting attended by CCRU business partner.
- Health Protection meeting attended by emergency planning manager
- NE Sector HERG expand attended by business partner

9. Summary of Incidents 2023

Below is a list of incidents that have occurred during 2023 and the emergency response plan has been activated.

- 21/03/2023 @ 1647hrs. Gas leak at 47 Longfield Crescent.
- 22/03/2023 @ 1228hrs. Explosive device on Drake Close. Found to be a commercial firework.
- 08/05/2023 @ 1704hrs. House fire at 6 Water Street. Family put in hotel overnight.
- 24/06/2023 @ 1700hrs. House fire St Thomas street north. One fatality and a number of properties damaged.
- 27/06/2023 @ 2106hrs. Smoke plume / commercial fire on West End street.
- 17/11/2023 @ 2205hrs. Dangerous building after vehicle crash.

10. Emergency Response Mandatory Training Programme (2023)

A training audit was completed in January 2023 for all gold, silver and bronze officers to identify the training needs of the on-call team and to ensure compliance in the event of a public inquiry. Below is a list of training events that have been completed this year.

- Electricity Power Outage Workshop – January 2023
- Oldham Voluntary Sector Workshop – March 2023
- Exercise Might Oak – March 2023
- Resilience Direct Training – August 2023
- Resilience Direct Training – September 2023
- ACT Awareness Training – October 2023
- Loggist Training – October 2023
- METHANE & JESIP Training – November 2023
- Reception Centre Training – November 2023
- Cyber Training - November 2023
- New Emergency Planning Dashboard Roll Out – various 2023

11. Proposed / Planned Training Programme (2024)

Following discussions and feedback from duty officers, partners and lead external training providers, the following proposals have been mapped out for 2024.

- Members Training / Awareness – January 2024
- Hazardous Material Exercise – February 2024 (Silver & Bronze Officers)
- Moorland Fires Exercise – April 2024 (Gold, Silver & Bronze Officers)
- Vulnerable People Exercise – July 2024 (Gold, Silver & Bronze Officers)
- Stan Edge Tunnel Exercise – Oct 2024 (Silver & Bronze Officers)

12. Standby and Call-Out Payments

Definition: Standby payments are claimed by officers up to SM1 (SCP 63) in recognition that they are expected to be available for on-call duties outside of normal hours of work, in person, by telephone, or on Teams to respond to an incident / task that is usually associated with a statutory obligation.

Where 'standby' is a requirement of the post this will be specified in the contract of employment. Officers must be:

- contactable at all times when on standby duty;
- available to respond to the call to work;
- available to get into Oldham to attend site / meetings within an hour of being called; and,
- remain fit and capable to undertake the duties required. The 'standby' rota is set by the Head of Emergency Response, with a formal handover to the next rota duty every Monday morning at 09:00.

Formalities built into the On-Call Duty JD/PS - a standby shift should not be shorter than 12 hours or longer than 16 hours on a weekday. Saturday and Sunday are both 24 hour shifts. The standby payment is £25.00 per shift. Saturday and Sunday are two shifts each. So, a 'normal' weekly standby rota payment would be $9 \times £25.00 = £225.00$

Bronze and Silver officers (up to Head of service level) receive the standby allowance for being on call 24/7 during the week of their allocated duties which is £225 per week (as set out above). Officers AD and above do not benefit from the additional payment, as this is part of JD/PS under "additional senior management duties as required".

All on call changes will be recharged to the emergency planning cost centre (22760). Payments are made on a claims basis and are not paid when officers are unavailable to work due to sickness or annual leave.

Standby – remaining at home: This is where officers are on standby at home, but are not required to leave home to deal with the incident/problem/issue. Here the standby payment covers the first hour of work per shift (taking calls, recording the incident, taking appropriate action to resolve and completing the relevant paperwork).

If the incident requires time and support beyond the initial one hour per shift – this is recorded formally and claimed at the end of the standby rota with additional time paid at time and a half.

Standby – required to leave home: This is where officers are on standby at home, but are then required to leave home to deal with an incident/problem/issue on site within the borough. When this occurs, there is a minimum payment of two hours at plain time for the first call-out of the shift. The time commences as soon as the telephone call is received and includes travel time. Time beyond the first two hours or from the second call-out that shift must be accumulated throughout the week and then claimed at the end of the standby rota; these hours will be paid at time and a half.

Executive Summary

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Recommendations

Overview and Scrutiny are asked to note the content of this report and to feed back to the Head of Emergency Response on any opportunities for training / awareness or resilience needed over the next twelve months to strengthen and support on-call duties when needed to support Oldham's communities.